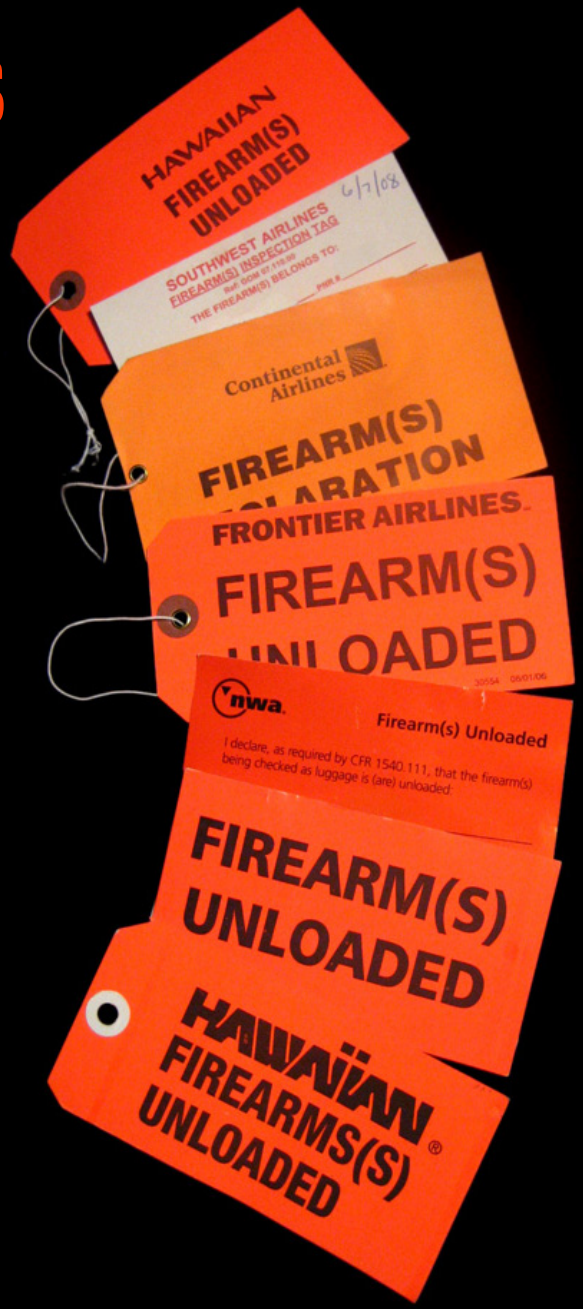
# Packing & the Friendly Skies




## Why Transporting Firearms May Be The Best Way To Safeguard Your Tech When You Fly

Deviant Ollam

# you may have seen me before...

# i like guns...

# ... some people don't

# i speak at lots of cons...

# many of which i can't drive to...

shmoocon — Washington, D.C.

HackCon — Oslo, Norway

CAROLINACON — Chapel Hill, North Carolina

CAN SEC WEST — Vancouver, Canada

Black Hat — Amsterdam, Netherlands

NACC — Cleveland, Ohio

Providence, Rhode Island

too1con — Seattle, Washington

LAYER one — Pasadena, California

seacureit — Sardinia, Italy

SHAKACON — Honolulu, Hawaii

Black Hat — Las Vegas, Nevada

DEFCON — Las Vegas, Nevada

Securest — Bergen, Norway

too1con — San Diego, California

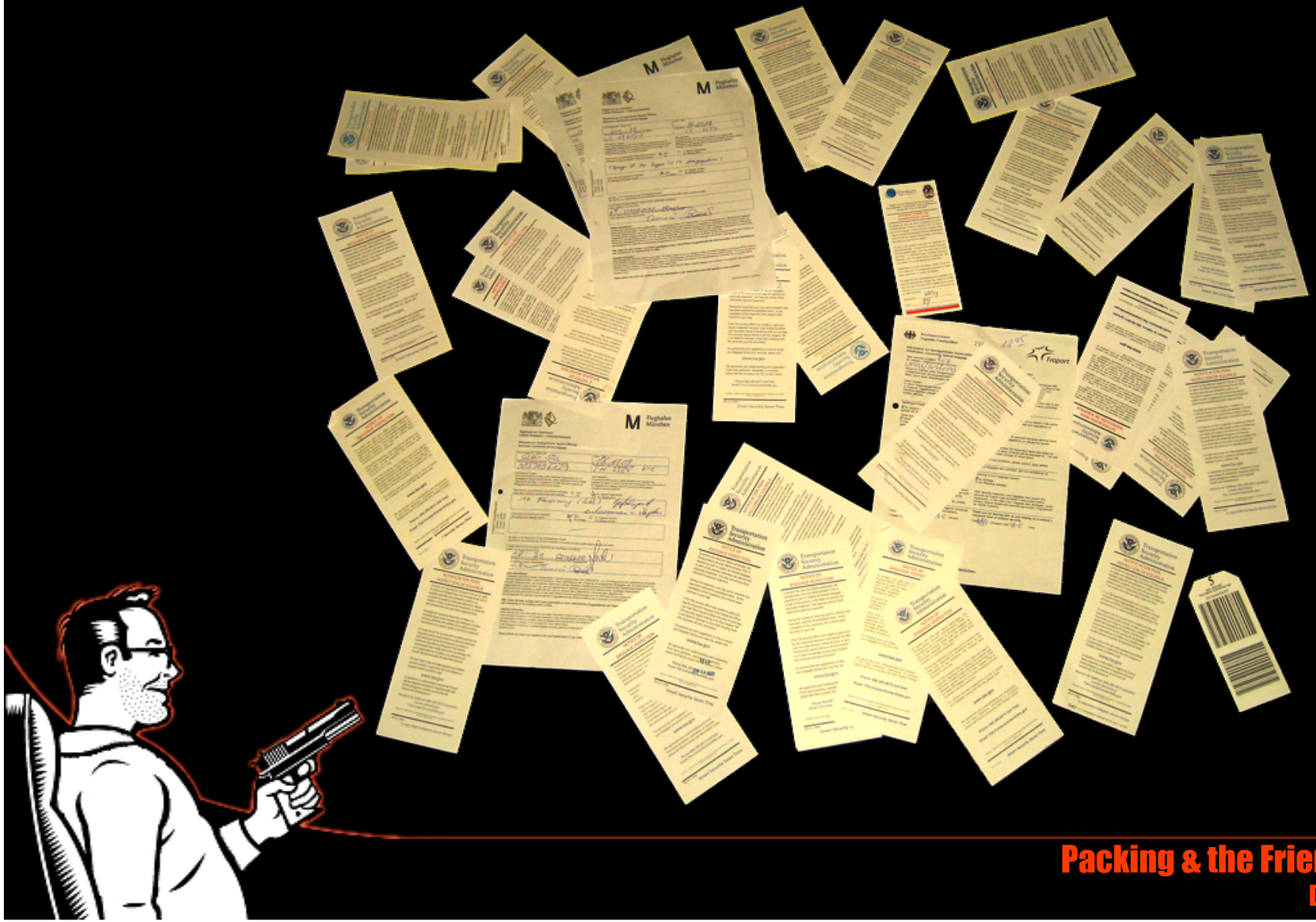
SECTOR — Toronto, Canada

hack in the box — Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

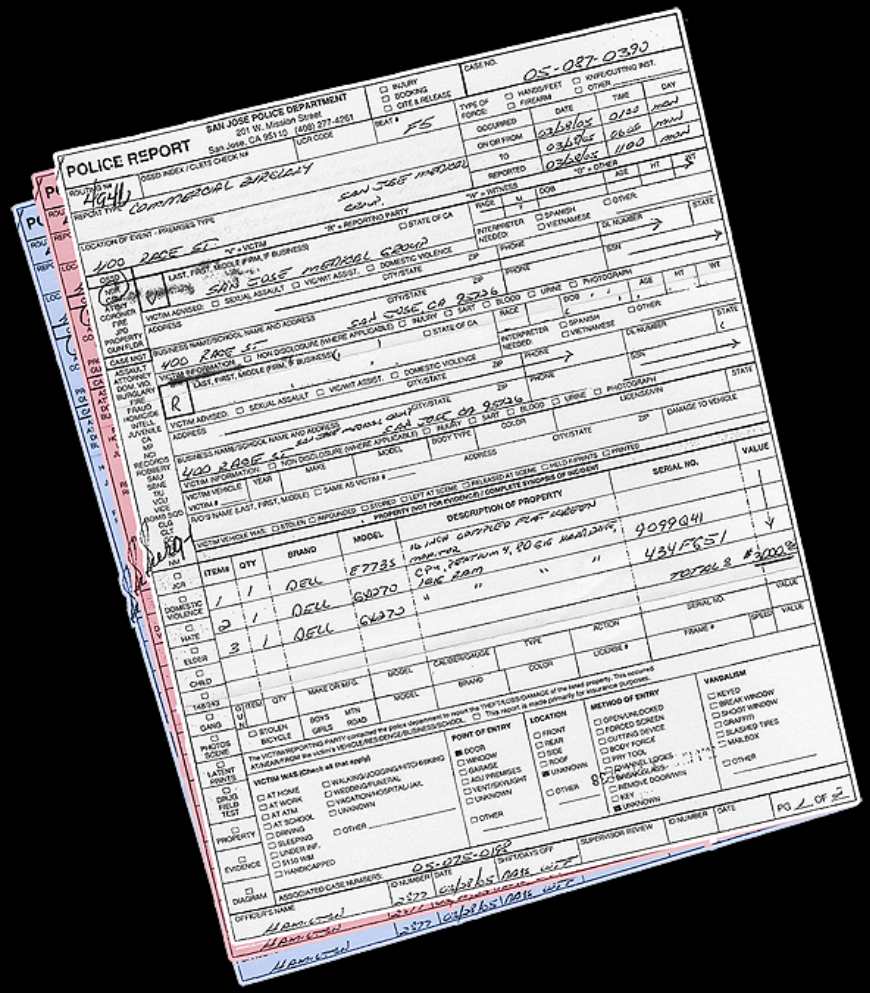
DEEPSEC — Vienna, Austria

ekoparty — Buenos Aires, Argentina

# my bags used to get opened a lot



# ... and not always by the TSA



**Packing & the Friendly Skies**

**Deviant Ollam**

# nowadays i lock all my gear

# notice... these are *not* TSA locks

# but proper heavy-duty padlocks

# how is this allowed

# simple, really...

# now, i fly with firearms all the time

# flying with firearms...

- it's easier than you think
- it's relatively hassle-free
- it results in *major* security

# facts and the law...

- **federal standards**
  (mostly uniform, specifics can vary by airline... but no one can abridge your rights)
- **checked bag only, unloaded**
  (do i really have to tell you that?)
- **non-TSA lock**
  (no one else gets the key or combo)
- **declared upon check-in**

# specifics about packing...

- **hard case, size can vary**
  (i'll assume you'll use larger luggage to leverage the law to your advantage)
- **ammo policies can vary a lot by airline**
  (how it's packed, how much you can carry, same luggage or separately)
- **bags may not be opened once secured**
  (unless you are present)
- **no outside indicator labels of any kind**
  (27 CFR 478.31 - Delivery by Common or Contract Carrier, 18 USC Section 922e)

# how the procedure works

# and what to expect...

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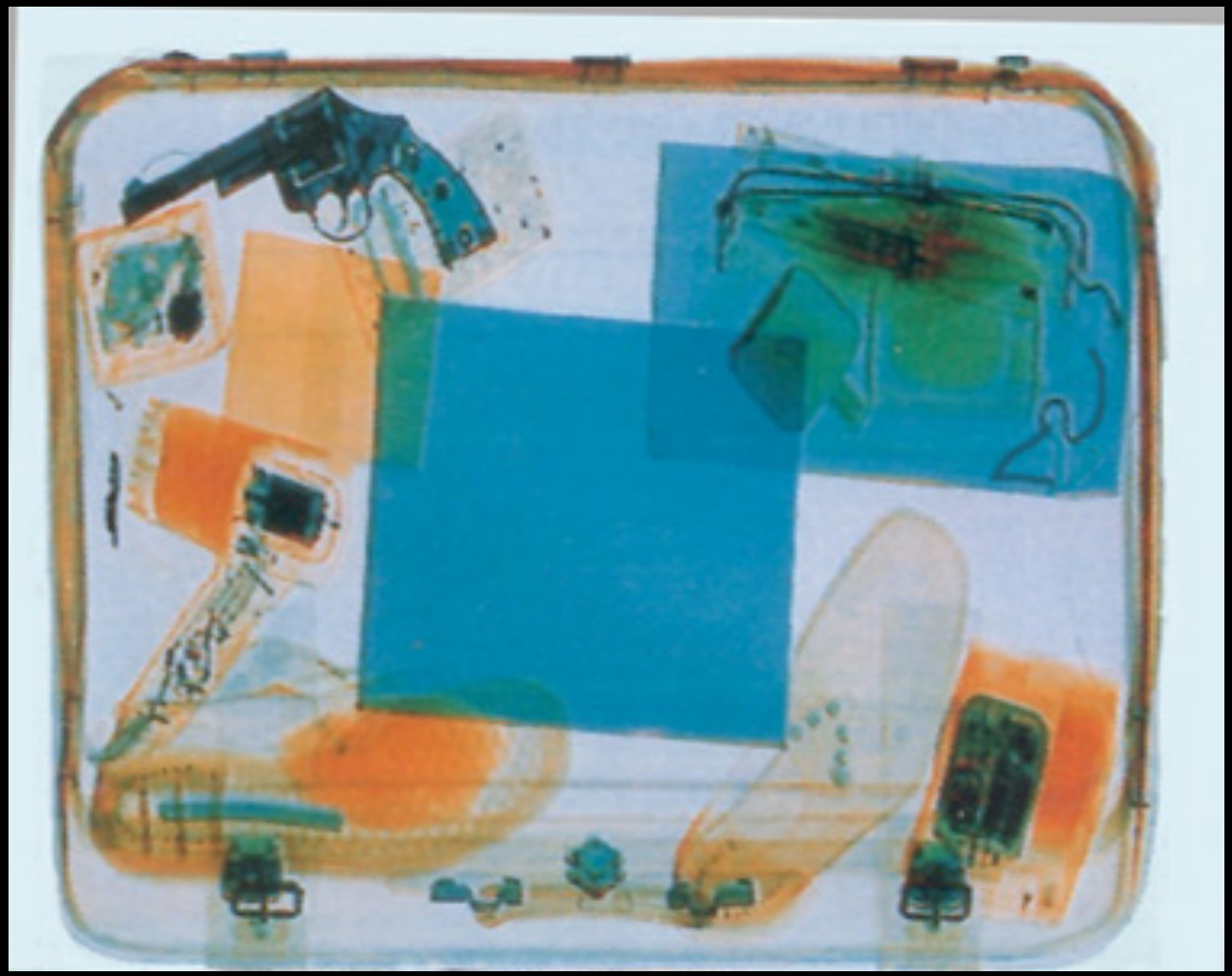

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some extra pointers that can make the whole process easier, better, faster, stronger...

# extra pointers...

- don't be a dumbass when you declare
- keep cases **locked** as much as possible
  (better to be asked five times to open them than to send them away unsecured)
- getting to secondary screening area
- **no** outside indicator labels of any kind
  (that's US federal law, other nations have own standards)

Federal law states: "No common or contract carrier shall require or cause any label, tag, or other written notice to be placed on the outside of any package, luggage, or other container that such package, luggage, or other container contains a firearm." 18 USC Section 922(e)

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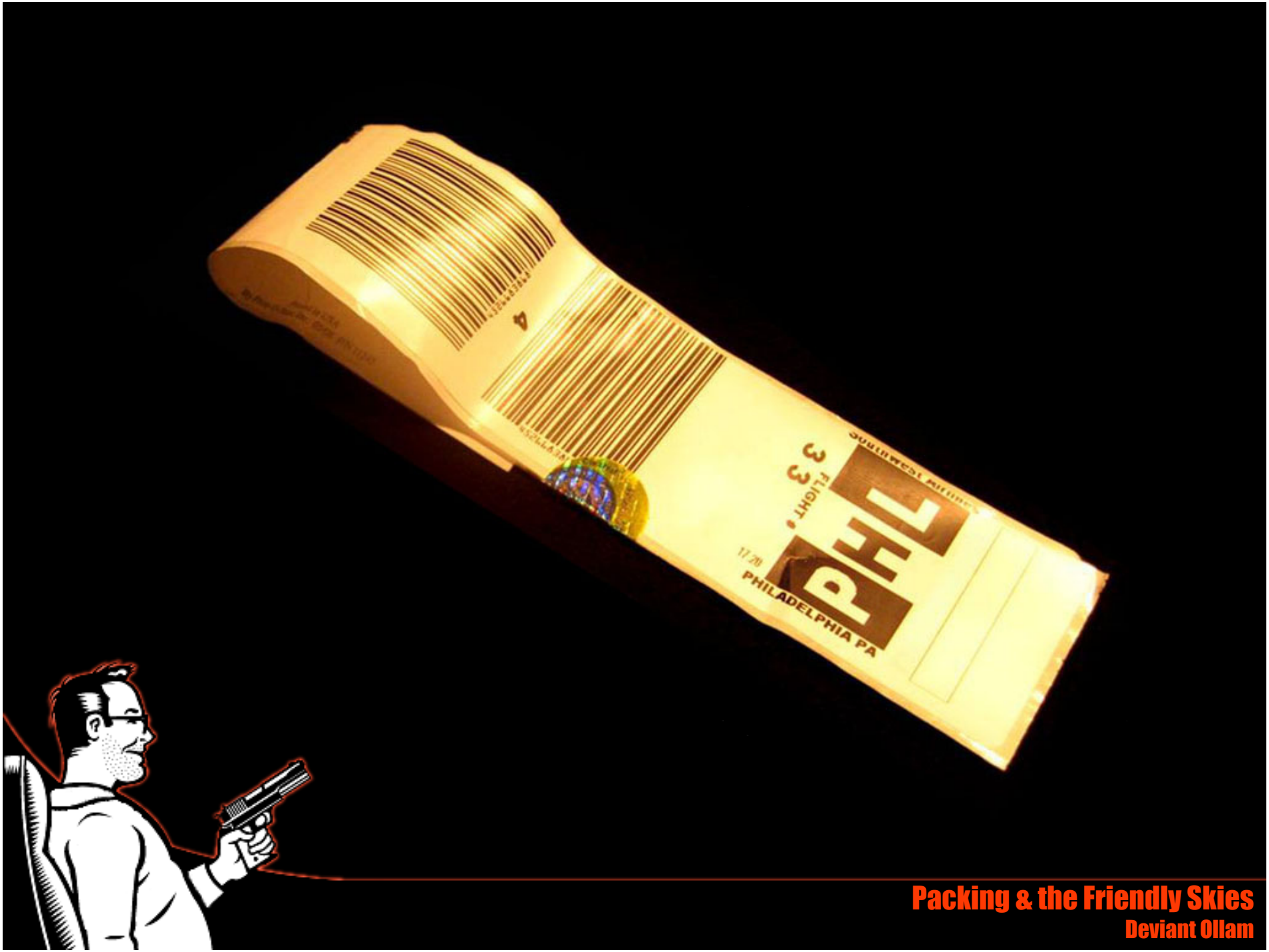


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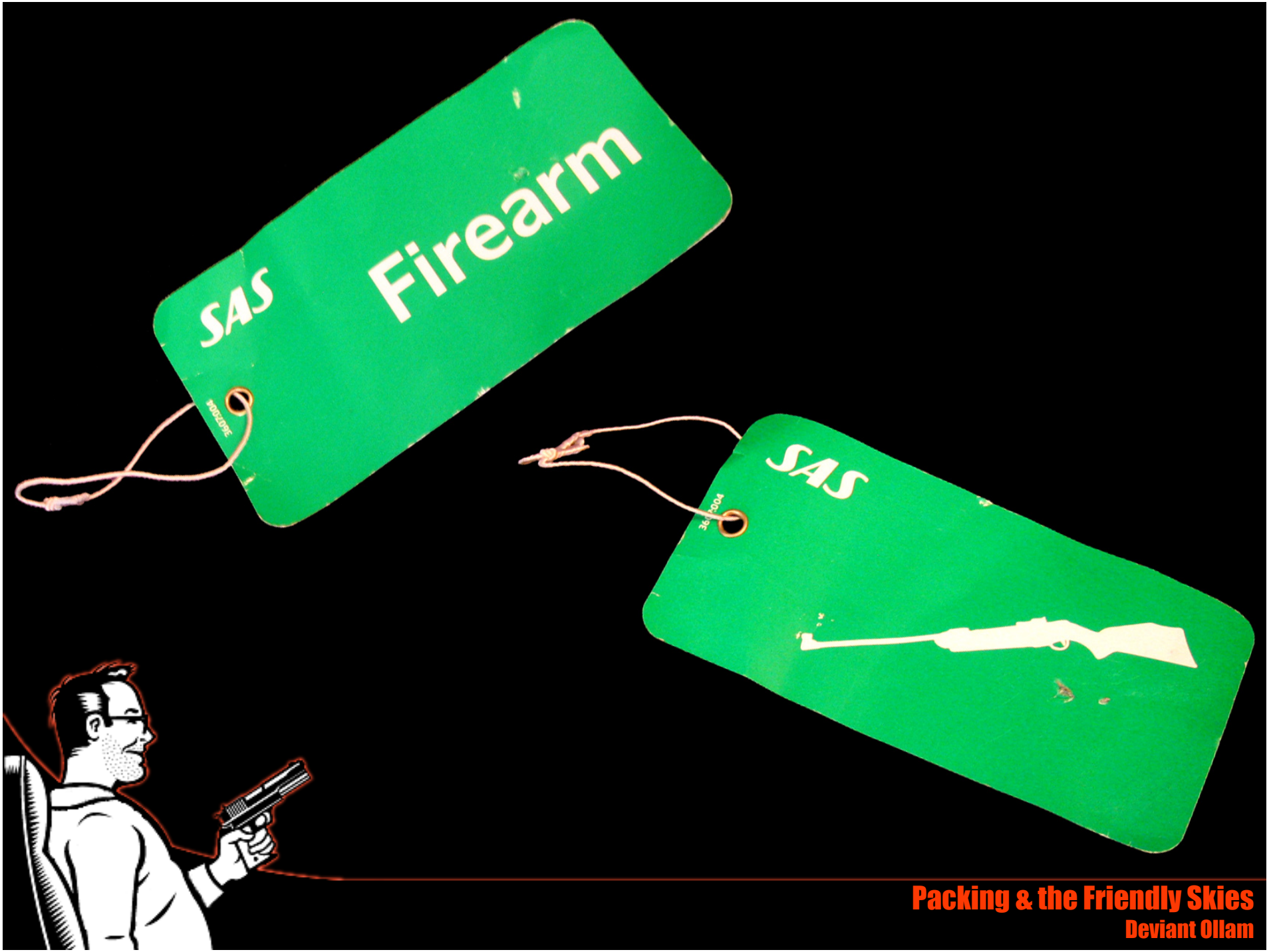


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# more international notes...

- clearing customs
- other people you'll encounter
- transfer check-in
- border zone firearm rules

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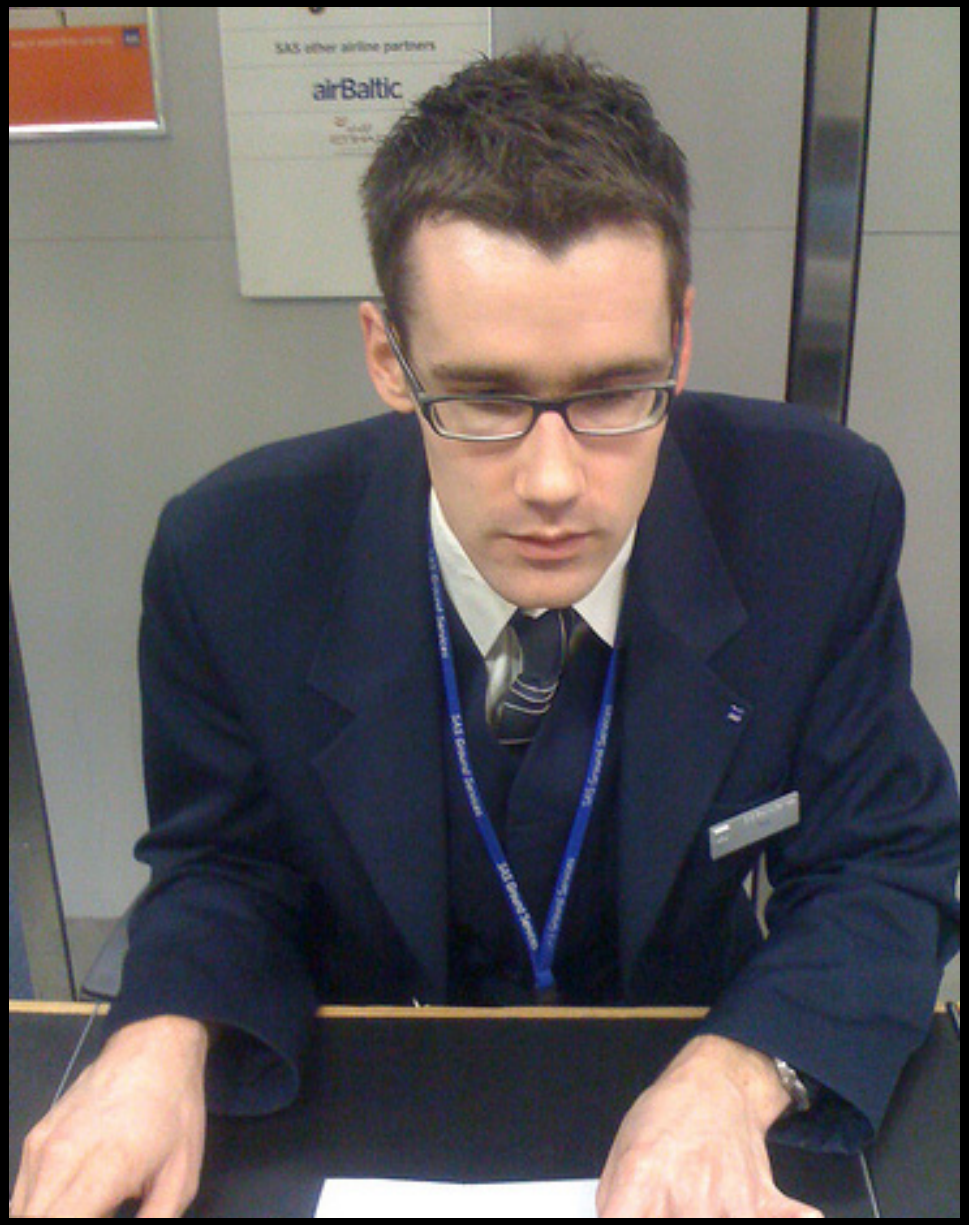

# Packing & the Friendly Skies

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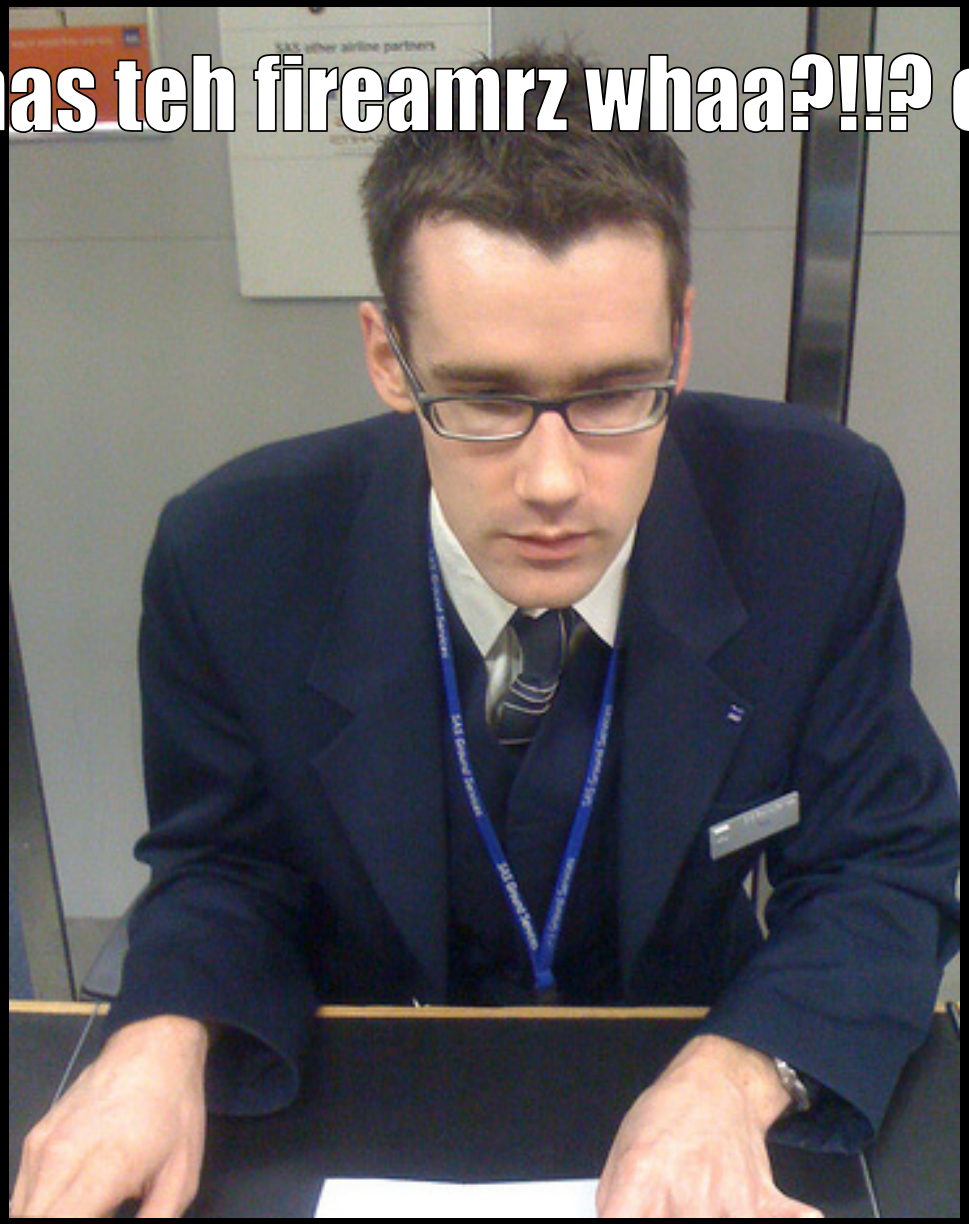
# omgz! j00 has teh fireamrz whaa?!!? oh noes!!1!



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ammo... yes.

flammables... no.

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**Deviant Ollam**

# Packing & the Friendly Skies

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# a few other good tips...

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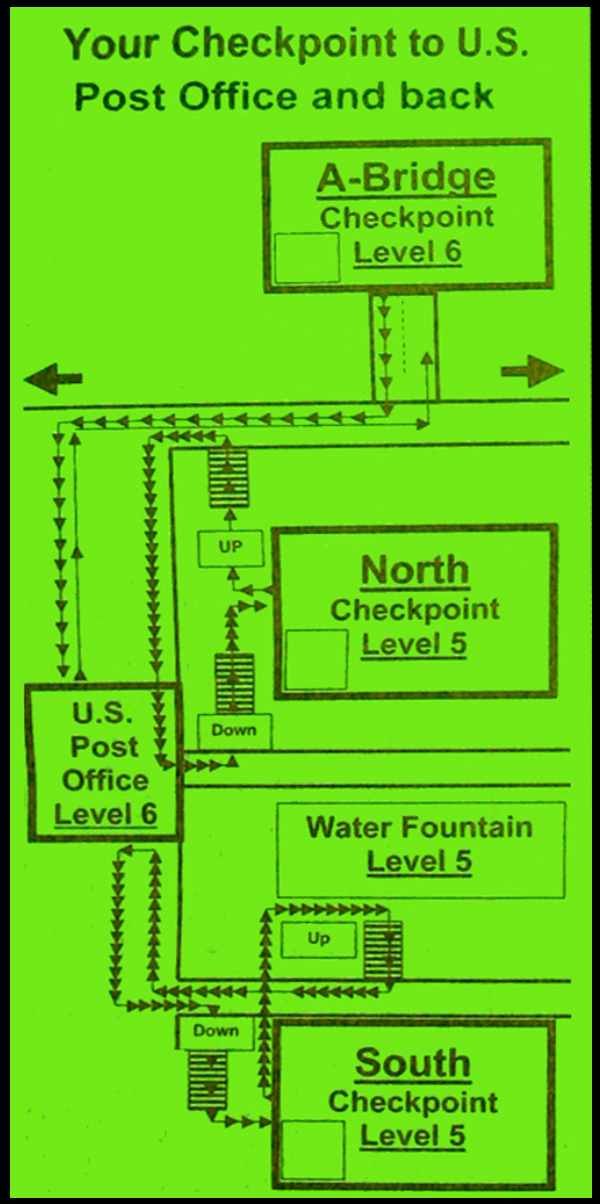
Why?
Why do I have to remove my laptop from its bag?
To ensure the electronics haven't been tampered with.
But wouldn't such a laptop look exactly normal to you untrained monkeys?
Shut up.
Looking like we're working is our priority
Transportation Security Administration
Learn more at www.tsa.gov

# Packing & the Friendly Skies

Deviant Ollam


Your Checkpoint to U.S. Post Office and back
A-Bridge
Checkpoint
Level 6
UP
North
Checkpoint
Level 5
Down
U.S. Post Office Level 6
Water Fountain
Level 5
Up
Down
South
Checkpoint
Level 5

**Packing & the Friendly Skies**

**Deviant Ollam**

# for all your mail needs ...

# Packing & the Friendly Skies

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# my advice . . .

USA FIRST-CLASS FOREVER
2001

FLAT RATE ENVELOPE
FLAT RATE POSTAGE REGARDLESS OF WEIGHT
DOMESTIC USE ONLY
PRIORITY MAIL
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
www.usps.com

# Packing & the Friendly Skies

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# Packing & the Friendly Skies

Deviant Ollam

# Packing & the Friendly Skies

Deviant Ollam

# concerns about weight ...

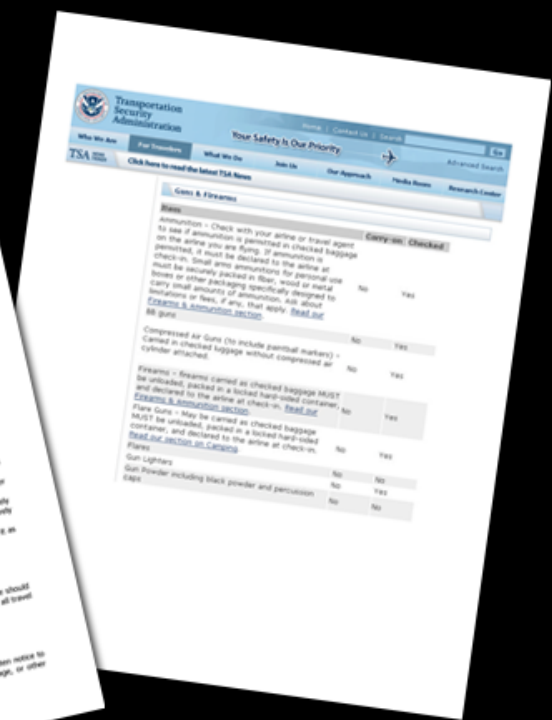
# South Bend fish scale & tape measure under $10

# blades, blades, blades ...

Gerber Artifact minitool
removable #11 blade
under $10
Packing & the Friendly Skies
Deviant Ollam

# if there's a problem...

- **know the rules, show the rules**
  (legal citation sheet on deviating.net)



# if there's a problem...

- know the rules, show the rules
  (legal citation sheet on deviating.net)
- stay polite, stand your ground
- be direct, you are doing nothing wrong

CERTIFICATE OF RELEASE

As required by the provisions of Penal Code Section 851.6 (as amended by Stats 1975, ch 1117) I hereby certify that the taking into custody of _____ on 3-6-19 at 1209 hours
Subject's name

by the SFPD was a detention only, not an arrest.
Releasing Agency

_____ was released on 3-6-19 at 1215 hours
Subject's name

by the SFPD pursuant to the provision of:
Releasing Agency

Paragraph (1) of subdivision (b) Penal Code Section 849; paragraph (3) of subdivision (b) of Penal Code Section 849; Penal Code Section 849.5; and Penal Code Section 851.6; pertinent portion of which appear on the reverse of this certificate.

Officer's Full Name R. SERRANO Title OFC Unit GC41A

Officer's Signature [signature] Star 1918

Releasing Officer ☒ Superior ☐

Original to citizen. Copy to Record Room. Attach additional copy to citation.

SFPD 184 Rev. (06/05)

**Packing & the Friendly Skies**

**Deviant Ollam**

# peace of mind over lost bags ...

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still, nothing as satisfying as ...

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# more tips...

- insurance coverage can vary
- possible to play with weight a bit
- inside other luggage? sure, but why?
- not just “functional” firearms...

# what counts as a firearm?

- proper guns
- flare guns
- starter / blank pistols
- airsoft pieces
- replica weapons
- gun parts & hardware?

the law specifies "firearms" which, by definition, expel a projectile by means of a combustible propellant... but essentially, they want to avoid screeners or automated x-ray equipment seeing anything that looks like a firearm when they weren't expecting to encounter it.
http://deviating.net/firearms/packing/#flare

# how do the various carriers rate?

**A**

(maybe)

**B**

**C**

**D**

http://deviating.net/firearms/packing/report.html

Firearms Talks, Etc - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

http://www.deviating.net/firearms/packing/report.html

Firearms Talks, Etc

## Grade: B-

While Delta is not openly hostile to gun owners, some of their policies are clearly designed simply to generate revenue. While they explicitly state that a case may contain a total of four long guns, in subsequent sentences they specify that anything more than two rifles or two shotguns will result in an extra baggage fee. While Delta does not mandate "original manufacturer packaging" for ammo like some airlines, their policies are still restrictive enough that a holstered magazine is not allowed.

## United Airlines

as specified on their web site...

Grade: B / B+

> Firearms in checked baggage must be packed in a locked hard-sided bag or gun case.
>
> Ammunition is allowed in checked luggage in the original manufacturer's box or securely packed in a fiber, wood, or metal box to prevent movement of cartridges.

There are a handful of stories concerning problems with United (sometimes losing firearms, sometimes printing a row of "F" characters on luggage tags) but these accounts are conflicting and all unsubstantiated. One that that is for certain, however, is that the company speaks out publicly *against* the arming of airline pilots.

## Grade: B or B+

United is flexible about how guns and ammo can be packed, as long as it's secure. They appear to even be accepting of the use of loaded clips to secure ammo... since they specify "no movement" of cartridges as opposed to "separation" of the rounds. Pending confirmation that the row of "F" characters is a rumor (I personally have never seen this) i'd rate them in **B** range. If the story of that outside marking is true, even in some instances, then i'd switch United to a **B-** or **C+** even.

## US Airways

as specified on their web site...

Grade: A+

> US Airways will allow passengers to transport firearms in accordance with Federal Law.
>
> Firearms must be packed in a manufacturer's hard-sided container specifically designed for the firearm, a locked hard-sided gun case, or a locked hard-sided piece of luggage.

Done Tor Disabled 53° F | 92%

Firearms Talks, Etc - Mozilla Firefox

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http://www.deviating.net/firearms/packing/accounts.html

Firearms Talks, Etc

**Deviant Ollam**
I don't like relying on firearms as a way to skirt issues of bag weight, but we had so much damn gear going to ShakaCon that it sure helped.

ATL --> PHX--> HNL
*2009-06-07*
★★★★
U·S AIRWAYS

HNL--> PHX --> PHL
*2009-06-15/16*
★★★★
U·S AIRWAYS

---

**Deviant Ollam**
Heading down to SummerCon was a snap, and i got to give out a TTB business card to one airman who was getting a firearm-bearing bag screened next to me.

PHL --> ATL
*2009-06-05*
★★★★
U·S AIRWAYS

---

**Deviant Ollam**
United Airlines finally admits to me in no uncertain terms that they **do** make special entries into their computer for bags containing firearms.

PHL-->CMH-->ORD-->CID
*2009-05-28*
★★★★
U·S AIRWAYS

CID --> ORD --> PHL
*2009-06-01*
★★★½
UNITED

---

**Deviant Ollam**
A great trip. One potential incident fixed right away by a good supervisor. A scary lesson about claiming bags quickly, too.

PHL --> PHX --> LGB
*2009-05-22*
★★★★
U·S AIRWAYS

LAX --> DFW --> PHL
*2009-05-25*
★★★½
AmericanAirlines

---

**C.M.**
Wow, what a bit of troubling travel. From bad to worse, almost no aspect of this trip was without difficulty.

PHL --> HOU
*2009-04-13*
★★☆☆
SOUTHWEST AIRLINES

HOU --> PHL
*2009-04-16*
★☆☆☆
SOUTHWEST AIRLINES

---

**Deviant Ollam**
Smooth sailing to and from Texas, despite travel on carriers not recognized for outstanding policies.

PHL --> DFW --> AUS
*2009-03-22*
★★★★
AmericanAirlines

AUS --> ATL --> PHL
*2009-03-28*
★★★☆
Delta

Done | Tor Disabled | 53° F | 92%

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http://www.deviating.net/firearms/packing/accounts.html

Firearms Talks, Etc

# Account of Flying with Firearms

Deviant Ollam

United Airlines finally admits to me in no uncertain terms that they **do** make special entries into their computer for bags containing firearms.

PHL --> CMH --> ORD --> CID
*2009-05-28*
U·S AIRWAYS
★★★★

CID --> ORD --> PHL
*2009-06-01*
UNITED
★★★½

## Luggage & Gear

As always, i was traveling with three of the army surplus steel mortar cases that are my customary luggage. After major error by the TSA in Newark when I was making some overseas travel (they cut locks of some of my luggage) i made the switch to Abloy Protec Puck Padlocks which are uncuttable as well as wholly un-pickable. On this trip to meet with TOOOL associates in Iowa i had one Beretta Model 92 pistol.

## Outbound Travel ★★★★

I arrived particularly early for my morning flight out of PHL. Even at 06:30, the airport was bustling and staff were present everywhere to handle check-ins. Niruh and Kyrah (in many instances, i do my best phonetic spelling of names told to me verbally... this is such an instance) checked me in. I was not asked to open and show the unloaded status of my pistol. Kyrah insisted that there is no special entry in the USAir baggage tracking system for firearm-bearing luggage. As usual, after the basic check-in we proceeded down to counter number 19 where the oversize baggage belt is located. My hard case was sent (locked) back to the TSA while Niruh waited with me. I heard the word "firearm" called out in some discussions as they found a screener to perform an immediate x-ray run. All things were clear. I have never had an issue checking in at this airport with this carrier, but one is given to wonder what policy they have in place if a firearm bag alerts in some way... where does secondary screening take place?

## Homebound Travel ★★★½

When checking-in for my United Airlines journey back to Philadelphia I was helped first by Crystal and then by Kevin, the former seeming a bit unfamiliar (though by no means difficult) with matters of firearms. In response to an inquiry of "which of [my] bags contain firearms" (I was coming home with locknicking equipment from Iowa inside an additional piece of luggage that I didn't have with me before) I asked

Done | Tor Disabled | 53° F | 92%

Firearms Talks, Etc - Mozilla Firefox

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http://www.deviating.net/firearms/packing/accounts.html

Firearms Talks, Etc

# Firearm Air Travel Questionnaire

Have you traveled by air with firearms? We would love to hear, in detail, how it went for you. If you'd like to tell us about it, please just send an email to deviant [åt] deviating [döt] net* and we're more than happy to publish your account here. All we ask is that you follow the format of this questionnaire when summarizing the details for us.

* address obfuscated to prevent spam. PGP key on major keyservers if you wish to secure your traffic.

## Background Details

**1. Your Name** - We can accept nicknames, initials, or just your first name if you'd like to remain a bit private.

**2. Your Itinerary** - This is your *booked* route and *planned* travel dates, whether a simple round-trip or some other combination of stops. Mention of delays or re-routings can be done later when discussing specific legs of your journey. Airport codes are more helpful than city names (and are more respectful of your privacy... we only care about air travel, not where you spent the 4th of July or which family you visited for Thanksgiving.) Please feel free to specify any scheduled layovers, despite the fact that these typically do not affect firearm-related travel.

**3. Your Airline(s)** - On which carrier(s) was your flight booked? Please feel free to mention any reasons why you chose these airlines, as well as any partnering or "dual-carrier" flights that happened (that is so common these days, we understand it's difficult to keep track)

**4. Luggage and Locks** - What brand (or what style) of luggage did you use when flying with firearms? How were they packed? In what manner were they secured? (We are especially interested in what brand or style of locks you used.)

## Outbound Departure Experience

**5. Airline Check-In Staff** - From the time you stepped from your airport transportation (car, cab, shuttle, train, etc) to the moment you received your boarding pass, how were you treated? How did the airline staff (both ticketing agents as well as any additional people like baggage staffers) react when you declared your firearms? Did they seem accustomed to this? Did they follow all the rules? Of particular interest to us...

**i. Locked Bags** - Did the check-in staff make any criticisms of your desire to lock your checked bag(s)? Did they inform you that you had done anything incorrectly? Did you have to escalate the matter to a supervisor, etc?

Done | Tor Disabled | 53° F | 92%

# please... tell me how it goes for you!

# two more pearls of wisdom...

# ... about skipping ahead in line

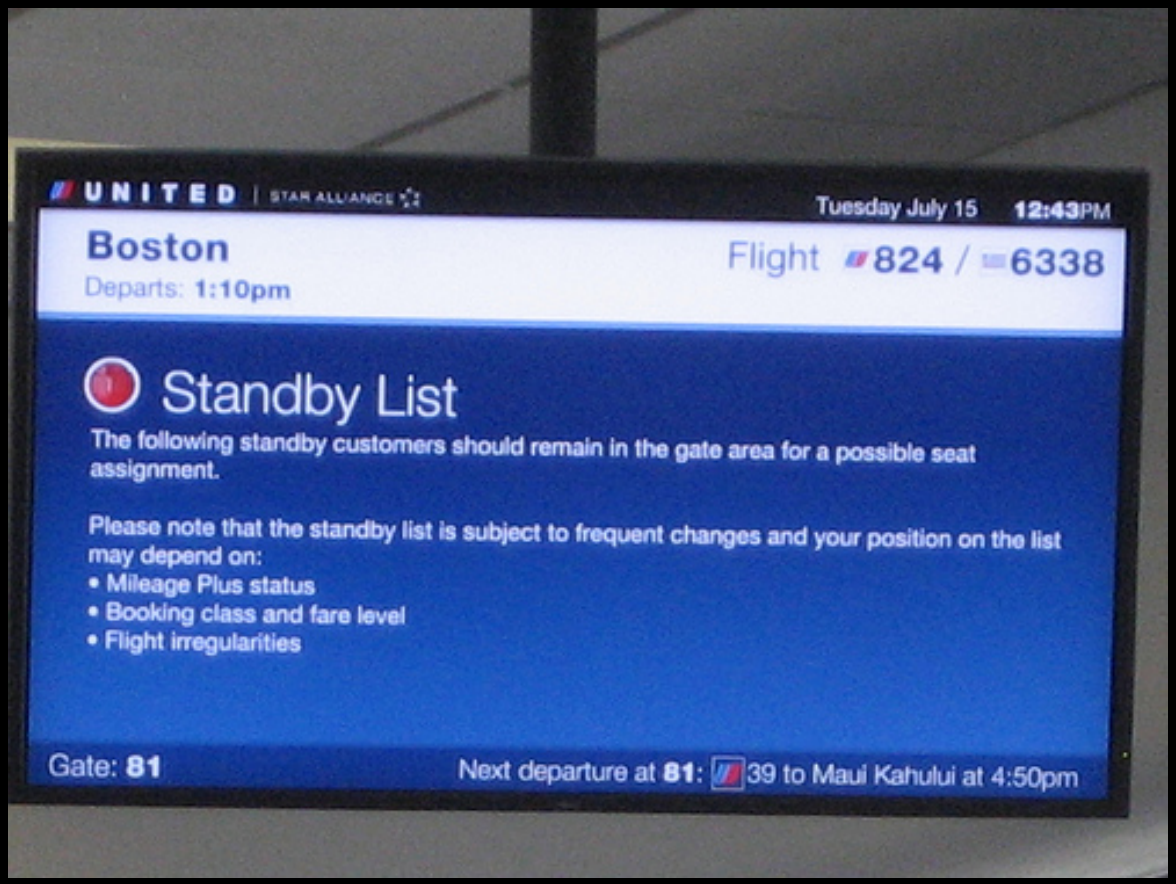
# when checking-in...

# ... grab a skycap

# when checking-in...

# ... grab a skycap

# when flying standby...

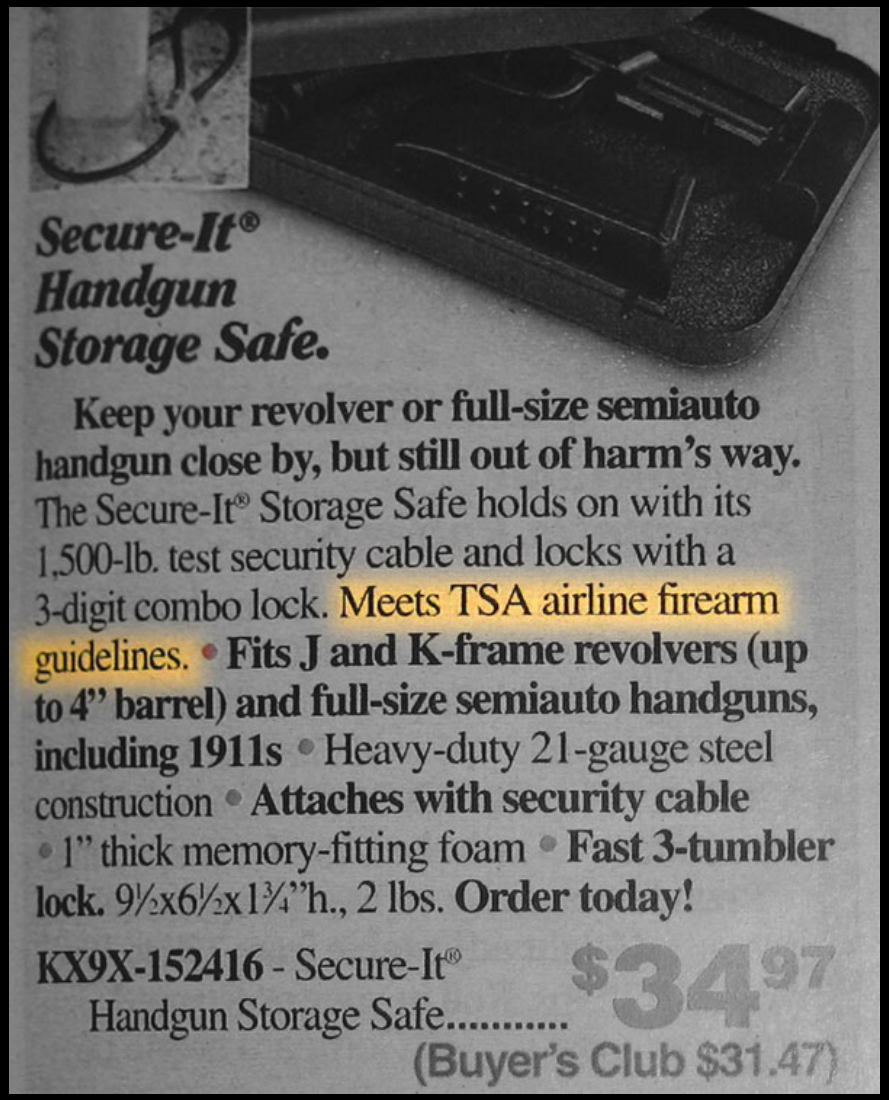


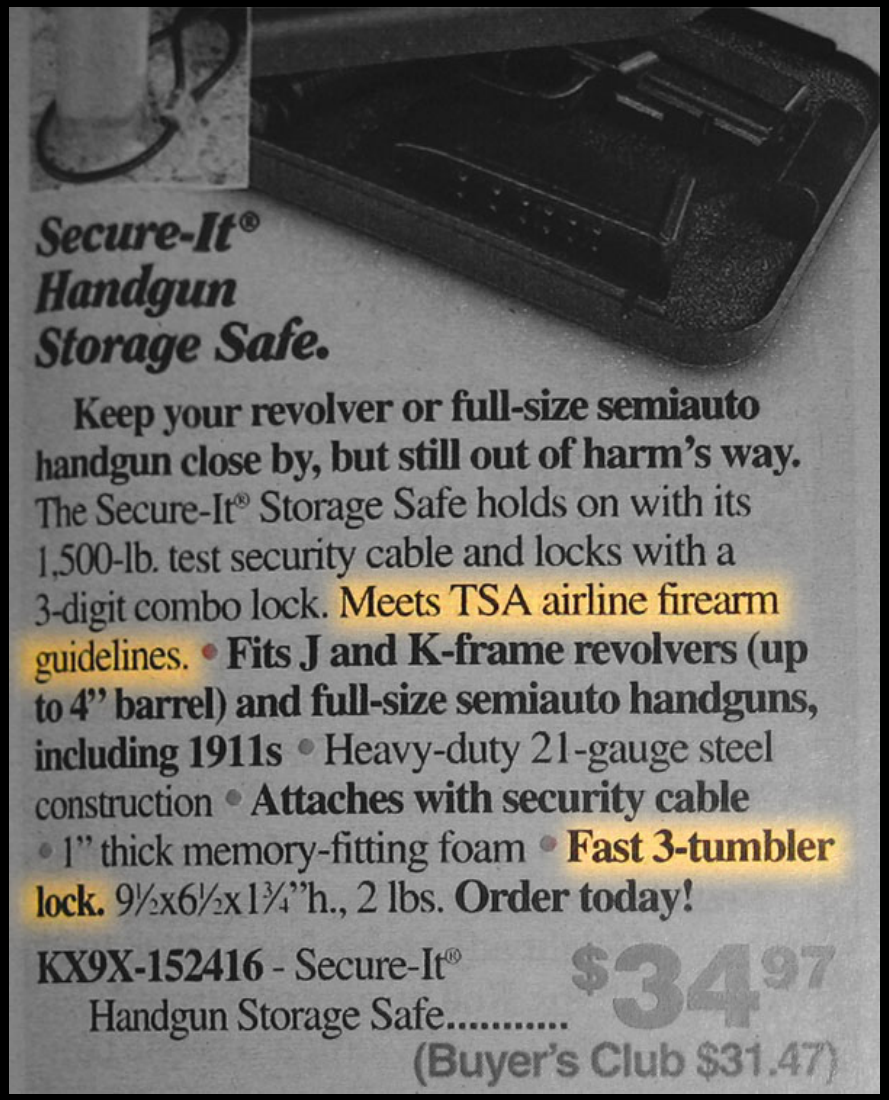
# ... does this move you up?

# a frequently asked question...

## "so, mister lock guy... what luggage locks & gun locks should *we* use?"

Secure-It®
Handgun
Storage Safe.
Keep your revolver or full-size semiauto handgun close by, but still out of harm's way. The Secure-It® Storage Safe holds on with its 1,500-lb. test security cable and locks with a 3-digit combo lock. Meets TSA airline firearm guidelines. • Fits J and K-frame revolvers (up to 4" barrel) and full-size semiauto handguns, including 1911s • Heavy-duty 21-gauge steel construction • Attaches with security cable • 1" thick memory-fitting foam • Fast 3-tumbler lock. 9½x6½x1¾"h., 2 lbs. Order today!
KX9X-152416 - Secure-It® Handgun Storage Safe.....
$34.97
(Buyer's Club $31.47)


Secure-It®
Handgun
Storage Safe.
Keep your revolver or full-size semiauto handgun close by, but still out of harm's way. The Secure-It® Storage Safe holds on with its 1,500-lb. test security cable and locks with a 3-digit combo lock. Meets TSA airline firearm guidelines. • Fits J and K-frame revolvers (up to 4" barrel) and full-size semiauto handguns, including 1911s • Heavy-duty 21-gauge steel construction • Attaches with security cable • 1" thick memory-fitting foam • Fast 3-tumbler lock. 9½x6½x1¾"h., 2 lbs. Order today!
KX9X-152416 - Secure-It® Handgun Storage Safe.....
$34.97
(Buyer's Club $31.47)


Secure-It®
Handgun
Storage Safe.
Keep your revolver or full-size semiauto handgun close by, but still out of harm's way.
The Secure-It® Storage Safe holds on with its 1,500-lb. test security cable and locks with a 3-digit combo lock. Meets TSA airline firearm guidelines. • Fits J and K-frame revolvers (up to 4" barrel) and full-size semiauto handguns, including 1911s • Heavy-duty 21-gauge steel construction • Attaches with security cable • 1" thick memory-fitting foam • Fast 3-tumbler lock. 9½x6½x1¾"h., 2 lbs. Order today!
KX9X-152416 - Secure-It® Handgun Storage Safe.....
$34.97
(Buyer's Club $31.47)

# what are the " best " padlocks out there?

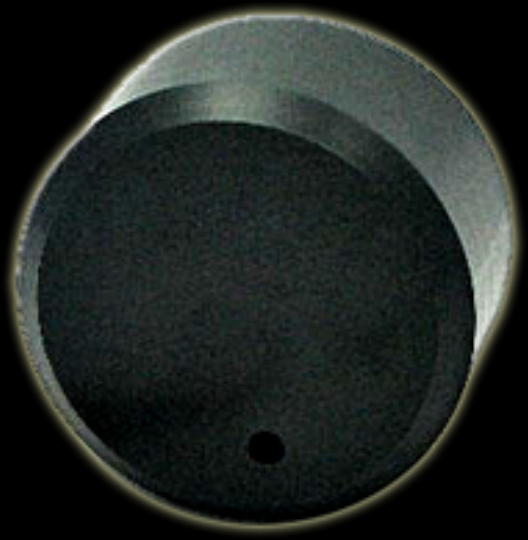
**Abloy 321**

Executive

**$25**

**Abloy 976**

Puck



**$90**

**Abloy 362**

Grade 6

**$200+**

**http://securitysnobs.com**

# another frequently asked question...

## “so... what do *you* use for luggage when you travel?”

# 81 mm mortar round case

# heavy hinge hasp

# bolts with J-B Weld or Loctite

# Packing & the Friendly Skies

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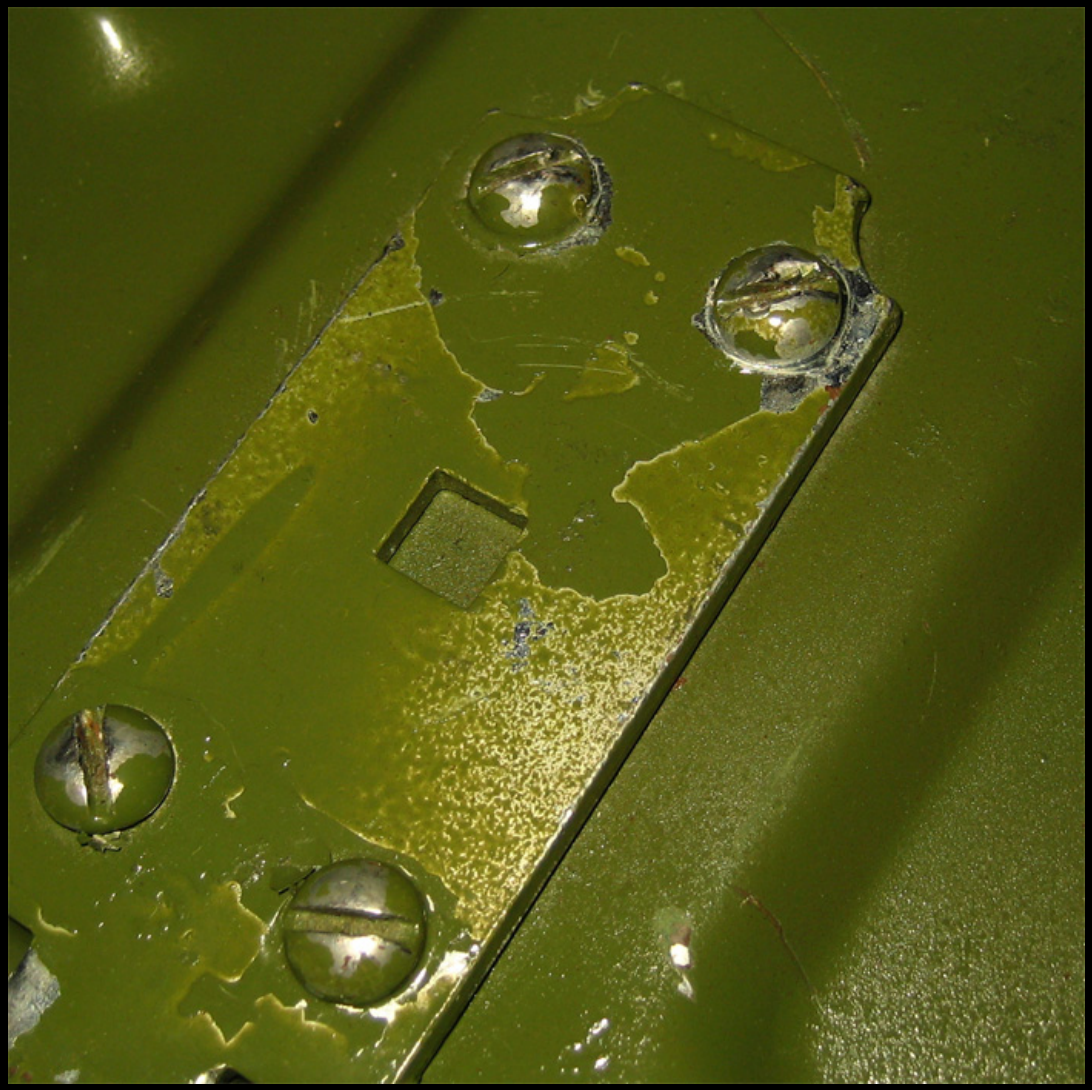

# my personal setup...

- 81 mm mortar round case

  $ 15 http://store.colemans.com/cart/ammo-can-81-mm-p-225.html

- heavy hinged hasp

  $ 10 hardware stores anywhere

- bolts, J-B Weld / Loctite

  $ 5 hardware stores anywhere

# my personal setup...

## ironclad luggage

## $30

# Packing & the Friendly Skies

Deviant Ollam

# thank you very much!

# any questions?

deviating.net/firearms

deviant@deviating.net